

2011 Seattle Fire Annual WMBE Plan

1. Department Representative

William Hepburn, Assistant Chief of Administration
Travis Taylor, EEO Officer
Sheila Kelly, Administrative Staff Assistant

2. 2011 Goals

In 2010, Fire had a goal of 22% for WMBE purchases (Purchasing and Consultant Contracts); we were able to reach 19.98%. Although this does not meet the expectation, it shows an effort to achieve the larger goal. 2010, along with 2011, has a tighter and smaller budget than previous years, and purchasing and contracting is being highly scrutinized. While the goal to give WMBE vendors the much needed purchases and contracts is our goal, we find that we are spending money on things that directly impact fire and life safety, which there are very few WMBE vendors. As stated in our 2010 WMBE Plan, we are finding it difficult to find vendors who meet WMBE criteria who carry fire and life safety items, and when we do find them, cost is often a deterrent. As for construction monies for 2011, no projects are being paid for out of Fire for construction costs this year, these are all being done through either maintenance or the Levy Project, so there will be no monies spent this year under this category.

In looking at the goals for 2010, and reflecting on 2011's budget, Fire is going to strive to reach 21.5% for purchasing and contracting this year. Currently, there are no large consultant contracts on the horizon, other than one for a grant (non-WMBE, vendor driven by grant). The majority of Fire's WMBE spending will be done via purchasing products and services. We are constantly looking for WMBE vendors who provide the monthly and annual services that Fire uses. Fire continues to use a WMBE EMS Supply vendor, which greatly helps meet our WMBE goals, we are currently looking for someone who provides janitorial, printing, computer equipment and other life safety needs. Our department representative is attending vendor fairs throughout the region, along with the City sponsored trade shows, and monthly meetings.

Currently, the department representative is going through annual and ongoing purchases in the department and looking at the WMBE Vendor list, to see what jobs can be accommodated by already existing WMBE Vendors.

While this will help with some of the purchases, we are also looking to get more vendors to sign up with the City as approved WMBE vendors.

3. Project Specific Strategies and Objectives

Looking at the major purchases and projects for 2011, they fall under the category of IT or grant specific purchasing. None of these meet the criteria for WMBE purchasing as blanket contracts are in place as are grant specific vendors. So while looking at the ongoing projects that Fire participates in every year, we are striving to use WMBE vendors in our outreach programs to the public, via using printers and interpreters. The department will also be pushing that any outside printing that occurs – department wide - will be with a WMBE vendor. Although, not a large amount of our spending this will ensure that both the WMBE and local vendor is being used.

4. Department Training

The Fire Department has trained the purchasers within the Department. By giving them access to the tools to find WMBE vendors, and letting them know that this is a priority for purchasing, and when a WMBE vendor is available and has competitive pricing then it will be used.

New training in 2011 will include sending out the web links to the purchasers (line-staff and administrators) along with their supervisors (managers), to ensure usage. There will also be a one-on-one training for new purchasers and managers, so that they can learn how to use the tools that are available to them.

The grant and consultant contracts team will also be trained to look for WMBE consultants, as well, as educating them on how to get consultants registered in the program, if they meet the criteria. We have been mildly successful in this in years past, and have brought several consultants into the program.

Another of Fire's goals this year is to get the new managers and administrators on board with the outreach plan. To educate them as to what the WMBE project is. To have them take an active role in creating an environment that is striving to reach our local WMBE vendors, and put city monies back into the local economy.

5. Outreach Events

Currently, Fire will be attending the City Trade Show that reaches out to WMBE firms, along with the ongoing meetings with Tabor 100 where we reach out to different WMBE vendors each quarter.

Fire also attends eight to ten fire service related vendor fairs a year. We are constantly trying to recruit vendors for the WMBE project at these events. This is how we recruited our emergency medical supplies vendors.

6. Consultant Inclusion Plans

Currently, the consultant contracts that Fire is working on are related to fire and life safety, and many of them are grant funded. While sometimes, we have the ability to choose from several vendors, the majority of the time, it is vendor specific. We strive to reach WMBE Consultants and achieve our goals in this area, but many times, we must use the vendor established by the grant funder.

As stated in the Training section of the plan, there will be a more active level of training with those that write the consultant contract, so that they will know how to look for consultants as well as know how to get consultants registered into the WMBE program. We would like to see the consultant register increased in the different consultant arenas.

7. Additional Strategies and Efforts

Due to the difficulty in finding WMBE vendors that provide services and equipment in firefighting equipment, we are looking at different vendors that provide ongoing needed items. Such as, janitorial supplies, printing services, miscellaneous equipment that is not Fire specific (i.e. paint, work gloves, etc).

In 2011, we will maintain looking at purchases that can be changed from a non-WMBE vendor to a WMBE vendor, and making changes where we can. This goal will be passed on throughout the department, and adhered too.